The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives a brief summary of important matters affecting labor, occurring in the industrial, legislative and judicial fields, and such other information that will benefit the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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Strong and bitter words indicate a weak cause.—Victor Hugo.

WHOLE NO. 1043. WILLIAM GREEN, President WASHINGTON, D. C., SATURDAY, APRIL 4, 1931 FRANK MORRISON, Secretary VOL. 21, NO. 4.

WORKLESS FIGURES MAKE SLIGHT CHANGE

Washington, April 4.—Trade union reports on unemployment during March, forwarded to A. F. of L. headquarters, indicate a slight upward change from February.

The final reports for February show 19 per cent of trade union members unemployed, while the preliminary figures for March show 18.2 per cent out of work. This is a drop in unemployment of three-quarters of 1 per cent.

"The only striking improvement is in clothing industries where the spring busy season is practically over. Members are very gradually getting back to work in metal trades, manufacturing and railroads," the report states.

"The spring upturn has not yet begun in building and 52 per cent are still out of work. The printing situation is especially bad. Unemployment has increased almost steadily for more than a year, and is now at the unprecedented figure of 11 per cent out of work. This is almost twice that of last year.

"Unemployment in water transport, food industries and street transportation (teamsters and street car men) increased in March.

"For the country as a whole the slight gains the last two months are encouraging, but they show little work has yet been provided for the six million unemployed."

"PROPERTY GUARDS" BILL PASSED BY HOUSE

Hatrisburg, Pa., April 4.—The Musmanno Coal and Iron Police bills passed the Pennsylvania House of Representatives by large majorities.

A coal and iron police bill favored by Governor Pinchot remains in the House Committee on Law and Order.

The Musmanno bills, urged by organized labor, repeal the present industrial police act and provide a system of property guards whose jurisdiction is limited to the property of employers and to guarding prisoners, payrolls and transmission lines.

The State Administration bill would create an industrial police force that would be hired, paid, trained and directed by the State and assigned to companies needing their services. The companies would reimburse the State.

Two unionists impressed lawmakers with the justness of their position that corporations are only entitled to protection of their property and that state police should not be permitted to wander outside that jurisdiction.

RELIEF FOR WORKLESS SETS NEW CITY RECORD

New York, April 4.—A record disbursement for relief to unemployed and their families was made in February by 11 major privately financed relief agencies and three tax-supported relief funds in this city. The expenditures totaled $5,175,000.

The nine leading family service societies spent $250,000 in February, as compared with $158,00 in February, last year, an increase of 80 per cent. They cared for 30,000 families, 11,000 more than were helped in February, last year, an increase of 59 per cent.

The figures showed that not only had the volume of relief steadily increased, as compared with earlier months of the winter, but that the percentage of increase, as compared with the corresponding month last year, showed a steady upward trend, which was most marked in February.

UNIFORM RAIL PRICE FACES FEDERAL PROBE

Washington, April 4.—The Interstate Commerce Commission wants to know why the price of steel rails has remained unchanged over a period of years.

The much-advertised law of supply and demand does not seem to operate in this case and the commission asks Attorney General Mitchell how come?

If the cabinet member fails to act, a Senate probe is possible.

Senator Couzens, chairman of the Senate Interstate Commerce Committee, started the inquiry. He recently referred to an unnamed New York banker who said that the railroads have for years been paying $45 a ton for steel rails, while steel in other shapes is sold at much lower prices.

PRIMARY LAW BEST, SAYS SENATOR NYE

Washington, April 4.—The direct primary system is less liable to corruption than choosing candidates under the old system of boss-controlled conventions, Senator Nye of North Dakota told a nation-wide radio audience over the Columbia Broadcasting System.

Mr. Nye is chairman of a Senate committee that has uncovered huge expenditures by public office seekers in recent years.

"The gold now being used in an effort to corrupt an electorate can be seen and counted," declared Mr. Nye. "Back in the days of political innocence no one was even able to estimate the sums spent to control the party caucus."

LESS ALIENS FAVORED

Washington, April 4.—Reduction of 90 per cent in all immigration quotas for a period of two years will be recommended by the next Congress by Senator Harris of Georgia. A similar bill passed the House at the last session, but was not considered by the Senate.

Mr. Harris said such a measure is necessary "with more than 6,000,000 unemployed and probably with from 5 to 10 per cent of the Nation's workers living on part-time wages."

EMPLOYES' STOCK OWNERSHIP HAS COLLAPSED

The business depression has undermined the system of employes' stock ownership and this latest short cut to "contentment" for wage earners is traveling the road of all panaceas.

The scheme was heralded as a new day. An economist in an eastern university was so jubilant over the plan that he wrote a book on the subject and predicted that it would result in "an industrial revolution." Wage workers will eventually own industry, he said.

This prediction is fantastic even to emotional folk, when viewed from the standpoint of present-day facts.

Employes of the steel trust, for instance, who receive $1,250 annually or less, may subscribe to but one share of that stock. An official who receives $36,750 annually may buy 14 shares.

These purchasing conditions involve two important features—first, that the steel trust pays certain of its employes the to buy a few shares of stock that has declined 200 and 300 per cent in price, with dividends either suspended or threatened.

These workers are realizing that even when dividends are assured, this income is far below wage gains secured by organized labor.

Anti-union employers are entitled to no credit for being less favorable to employes' stock ownership. They attempted to trap their workers, who reject the system. The employer changes front because he can not challenge a fact.

The scheme has had its day in court. It was an attempt to control workers.

Organized labor has been the one institution that has warned against this feudalizing system.

NATION'S WEALTH IN 19 YEARS IN HANDS OF 200 CORPORATIONS

New York, April 4.—At the present rate of increase, 80 per cent of the nation's non-financial corporate wealth (industry, transportation, mining, power, etc.) will be in the hands of 200 corporations by 1950, or 19 years from 1931.

This conclusion is reached by Gardiner C. Means in discussing a statistical survey conducted by the Columbia Social Science Research Council, on the part being played in American life by large corporations.

Mr. Means shows that corporations with assets in excess of $80,000,000 are increasing their power and now control four-fifths of the assets of corporations whose stock is regularly traded on the New York Stock Exchange.

During the period 1909-1927 the assets of these corporations grew more than twice as fast as the assets of all other non-financial corporations, and at this rate they will own 80 per cent of all non-financial corporate wealth in 1950.

"The huge corporation, the corporation with $80,000,000 of assets or more," said Mr. Means, writing in American Economic Review, "has come to dominate most major industries, if not all industry, in the United States. A rapidly increasing proportion of industry is carried on under this form of organization. There is apparently no immediate limit to its increase. It is coming more and more to be the economic unit under which American economic, social and political life must deal."

HOW TO DEVELOP HOME MARKETS

The United States must develop home markets, is the recommendation of Dean Wallace Brett Donham of Harvard Graduate School of Business Administration, in his book, "Business Adrift," just published.

The author predicts destruction of the American capitalist system unless this action is quickly taken.

Dean Donham opposes seeking foreign markets. If America is victorious in an economic war, he said, England and Germany would be ruined, as their economy is based on foreign trade. A struggle for world mar , he said, would be the beginning of the fall of Western civiliz

Trade unionists hav tedly pointed out that with higher wages America's ho ts can be developed to unlimited possibilities

Certain groups of nploy , statisticians and economists watch food prices and de lower veges when the price of eggs or bananas drop 5 cents en. Home markets can not be developed under this system.

The bread basket theor of wages has no place in a scheme such as is suggested by Dean Donham and long demanded by organized labor.

U. S. TO DEPORT SMUGGLED SEAMEN

Washington, April 4.—Deportation of aliens smuggled into this country as "seamen" is ordered by the Department of Labor.

The United States Supreme Court has aided this movement by its recent decision that an alien who has unlawfully been in the country for three years can be deported.

The aliens ship in foreign ports and pay from $200 to $400. They pose as "seamen," and when the vessel docks at an American port they step ashore and disappear in the large cities.

The King bill, passed three times by the Senate, would correct this condition by having all seamen examined by government officials before the ship is docked. No seamen would be held and shipped to their home port at the expense of the vessel that brought them. Vessel owners oppose the King bill, which failed to be voted on in the House in the closing hours of the last Congress.

The Department of Labor is aware of the futility of attempting to stop this influx of aliens until legislation along lines of the King bill is passed.

Under present conditions the government deports the aliens—when they are finally discovered after much expense. Under the King bill the aliens would easily be discovered and shipowners would pay for deportation.

WORLD DEPRESSION HITS BRITISH JOBLESS PAY

Princeton, N. J., April 4.—England's unemployment insurance system was never intended to cope with a business depression such as marks that country, as well as other sections of the world, said Rev. T. A. E. Davey, canon of Liverpool cathedral, who is visiting Princeton University.

Canon Davey said he favored unemployment insurance measures as a matter of sound economics, but pointed out that the depression has made an unusual condition, which shows up badly for the insurance system.

On the other hand, he said, what else England could have done is not clear.

300,000 IDLE IN CANADA

Ottawa, Canada, April 4.—Unemployment in Canada was estimated at 300,000 during a debate in the Dominion parliament.

RAIL EMPLOYMENT 10 PER CENT LESS

Washington, April 4.—Railroad employment in this country, last year, dropped 10 per cent as compared with 1929, according to the Interstate Commerce Commission.

During 1930 there was an average employment of 1,510,688, with a total wage of $2,590,274,843. This compares with employment of 1,686,769 and a wage of $2,940,868,690 in 1929, a decrease of 10.44 per cent in employment and 11.92 per cent in wages.

The largest decrease in railway employment was in maintenance-of-way and structures, which dropped 15.08 per cent in 1930 as compared with the 1929 total.

Maintenance of equipment and stores were second with an employment drop of 10.96 per cent, while the next, 9.76 per cent, was in employes engaged in transportation, train and engine.

Railway executives, officials and staff assistants were the least affected by the employment decreases, the loss in this classification being only 2.33 per cent, while professional, clerical and general employes dropped only 6.09 per cent.

RAIL WORKERS SUFFER BUT DIVIDENDS HOLD

Montreal, Quebec, April 4.—The annual report of the privately-owned Canadian Pacific railroad shows "business as usual" for stockholders, but unemployment, part time and wage cuts for labor.

Large numbers of these workers have been laid off and some shops are working but 32 hours a week. Working expenses were cut $23,934,265 last year, according to the annual report.

The usual dividends to stockholders were paid and the company's profits from all sources are practically the same as in 1929.

The company's "special income" from steamships, hotels, telegraphs, lands, mines, etc., amounted to $20,042,923, a new high record and more than $5,000,000 above the 1929 figures.

LOWER SPEED ADVISED

Madison, Wis., April 4.— Lower speed for fire apparatus is advised by J. E. Florin, superintendent State Fire Prevention Division. Mr. Florin said more firemen are killed or injured while going to fires than while engaged in fire fighting. Collisions with private cars and trucks is not a necessary incident of the service and is inexcusable, he said.

FORD, MOTOR KING, USES FOREIGN SHIPS

Washington, April 4.—The Ford Motor Company, owned by Henry Ford, is using foreign ships in competition with American vessels, according to charges filed with the United States Shipping Board.

Ford is also soliciting general cargo freight to European ports and his policy threatens the stability of the rate structure maintained by American ships.

Shipping board officials say they can not compel Ford to desist from patronizing foreign ships, but he might be "requested" not to carry general cargo on his chartered ships that fly foreign flags.

REDS GENTLY HANDLED IN SOUTHERN STRIKE

New Orleans, April 4.—Communists were gently handled in a local court when three of them were charged with violating an injunction against striking longshoremen.

Two Communists were found guilty of contempt. They were each sentenced to 10 days in jail, but were given credit for the time that they were held previous to sentence. The other Communist was released.

The strikers compare this leniency to the treatment they receive. None have been sentenced to less than 60 days and several have been given six-month terms.

The workers were forced on strike February 23 to protect their right to organize. They oppose wage cuts and a system of forced loans at exorbitant interest.

The New Orleans Shipping Association has spurned conciliation offers by Governor Long, Mayor Walmsley and the Commission Council.

CLOAK UNION WINS EXTRA PAY DISPUTE

New York, April 4.—Raymond V. Ingersoll, impartial chairman of the cloak industry, ruled that when an employer pays a wage rate above the minimum scale, that rate can not be changed without the consent of the worker and the union.

Manufacturers and the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union established the impartial chairman to adjust disputes.

Under this wage contract there is no definite agreement of existing rates above the scale, but as higher rates are paid to exceptional workers, these rates can not be changed at the employers' will, the chairman held.

REJECT IDLE INSURANCE

Columbus, Ohio, April 4.—A House committee refused to favor a bill that would set up a State fund for unemployment insurance. A Senate committee had previously taken similar action.

TAXI DRIVERS WIN

Los Angeles, Calif., April 4.—Taxi Drivers' Union No. 640 secured their first signed agreement—from the California Cab Company.

POLICE AID EMPLOYER TO STOP MILL STRIKE

Philadelphia, April 4.—City police terrified non-English speaking employes of the anti-union Apex mill from joining the American Federation of Full Fashioned Hosiery Workers' strike.

The police department, at no time, has been used more flagrantly in the interest of an employer. Officers patrolled each floor of the mill and threatened employes with deportation as Communists if they ceased work.

MOONEY PARDON URGED BY UNION EXECUTIVE

San Francisco, April 4.—Pardon for Thomas J. Mooney is urged by M. J. Scheyds, president International Molders' Union, in a letter to Governor Rolph.

"Since the commitment of Mooney many things have developed which cause unprejudiced people to believe in his innocence," said President Keough. "Practically all of the State's important witnesses have, in sworn statements, repudiated their testimony at the trial of Mooney. The trial judge, all of the prosecuting attorneys except Fickert, and all the living jurors have signed petitions asking that Mooney be pardoned. Most of them expressed the belief that Mooney is innocent.

"In view of all the circumstances in connection with this celebrated case, I personally, and in behalf of the organization I represent, earnestly request that you immediately grant Thomas J. Mooney an unqualified pardon and thus right the wrong that the great State of California has done to an innocent man."

The Mooney pardon movement has been strengthened by a committee of churchmen, headed by Rev. Francis J. McConnell of New York, bishop of the Episcopal Church.

FIVE-HOUR WORK DAY URGED BY LAWMAKER

Vancouver, Canada, April 4.—The five-hour work day, or two shifts of four hours each, as a solution for unemployment was urged by Colonel Nelson Spencer, member of the British Columbia Legislature from this city.

Colonel Spencer's drastic proposal is especially significant because he is a leading Conservative. He said the five-hour day can be generally applied without disturbing industrial conditions.

He suggested that the Dominion Government arrange with the President of the United States for a conference on the five-hour day.

WINNING STRIKE

Philadelphia, April 4.—Striking hosiery workers secured 11 settlements and more than 1,200 workers return to their employment under union conditions. The strike was called February 16. Several large plants are tied up.

Police and injunction judges are at the service of employers, but these forces fail to discourage workers.

FASCISTS ESCAPE CENSURE; CONCEAL "BORING" POLICY

Washington, April 4.—Secretary of State Stimson rebuked a group of New York anti-fascists who objected to criticisms by the Italian ambassador to this country of opponents of Mussolini. The ambassador was charged with "preaching divided allegiance" to Italians in this country.

Secretary Stimson said the United States "has no interest in controversies arising between groups of American citizens of foreign origin, in respect to questions of internal politics in the countries to which they formerly owed allegiance."

Mr. Stimson expressed the hope "such groups will become so thoroughly identified with the country of their adoption that they cease to engage in futile controversies of that nature."

Anti-Fascists reply that the secretary has "entirely misunderstood the point when he speaks of this as a controversy between groups of American citizens."

The anti-Fascists are objecting to spokesmen for the Italian government of Americans who demand that Communists be deported when they attempt to undermine the American government.

"The controversy," declare the anti-Fascists, "is between those Americans of Italian ancestry who favor undivided allegiance to this country and Almatare Martino who has called such people renegades if they do not support the Mussolini government."

The anti-Fascists point out that their position is identical to that maintained by Americans who object to the policy of Communists who attempt to undermine the theory of the American government.

New York, April 4.—"Italy's newspapers are shortly servile under Mussolini," said Marlen E. Pew, editor of Editor and Publisher, in a speech in this city.

Mr. Pew said that "Italy's once glorious free press has been so completely submerged that one doubts if censorship were removed tomorrow the editorial offices would know how to write an article or editorial on the evils of Fascism."

THEFT TO SUSTAIN LIFE UPHELD; WORKLESS INDICT SOCIAL ORDER

Philadelphia, April 4.—"I would steal before I would starve," said Daniel Willard, president Baltimore & Ohio Railroad, in an address before the Wharton School of Finance and Commerce of the University of Pennsylvania.

Mr. Willard was discussing unemployment, which, he declared, is an indictment of our capitalist system.

The railroad official expressed his belief that this system affords a better and fairer basis upon which to build an economic structure than any other system so far devised and tested by man.

The speaker, however, indicated impatience with those who refuse to discuss faults of this system. "We should," he said, "be the first to recognize these defects and should seek untiringly to correct them.

"A system—call it what you will—under which it is possible for five or six millions of willing and able-bodied men to be out of work and unable to secure work for months at a time, and with no other source of income, can not be said to be perfect or even satisfactory; on the contrary, it can be said to have failed in at least one very important detail.

"I can think of nothing more deplorable than the condition of a man, able and anxious to work, but unable to secure work, with no resource but his labor and, perhaps, with others even more helpless, dependent upon him. Unless he is willing to starve and see those who justly look to him for support also starve, his only alternative is to seek charity and, failing in that, to steal.

"While I do not like to say so, I would be less than candid if I did not say that in such circumstances I would steal before I would starve."

Mr. Willard's frank statement recalls a New York mass meeting a quarter of a century ago, when the speaker—who later became President of the United States and Chief Justice of the Supreme Court—was asked: "What should a starving man do?"

The answer was: "God knows."

WANT ANTI-TRUST LAW CHANGED TO AID BUSINESS MEN, NOT LABOR

New York, April 4.—A movement to amend the Sherman anti-trust law that industry "may feel more secure" was launched by the anti-trust committee of National Association of Manufacturers at a conference in this city.

President Edgerton said that "indirect price fixing" is necessary if a solution is to be found for overproduction, which, he declared, is the cause of the depression. Price fixing, declared Mr. Edgerton, should be "consistent with American institutions."

Section 1 of the Sherman law provides that "every contract, combination in the form of trust or otherwise, or conspiracy, in restraint of trade or commerce among the several States, or with foreign nations, is hereby declared to be illegal."

Section 4 empowers equity courts to "prevent and restrain violation of this act."

These two sections are the base of every major injunction against labor.

When these facts are recalled it can be understood why James A. Emery, general counsel of the manufacturers' association, warned the conference that while the right to fix prices should be secured, manufacturers must not secure advantages already possessed through judicial interpretation of the law.

The suggestion that the Sherman act be modified to outlaw only "unreasonable" restraints of trade was opposed by Mr. Emery, who is aware of Supreme Court decisions in the tobacco and Standard Oil cases. These trusts were dissolved because they were "unreasonable." The trust was approved by the same court because it is a "good" combination.

The manufacturers want that the Sherman law should stand, but that its administration could be enforced to the advantage of business by setting up an advisory board with power to make advance judgments.

Under this system equity litigation will be avoided while the law remains in force against labor whenever a strike interferes with profits.

5-DAY WEEK OPPOSED BY SHORT TIME BOSSES

Oakland, Calif., April 4.—"There are thousands of employers in this country who can not give workers employment by giving a week pay," declared Rev. Neil R. MacDonald. "We find employers, who are being eliminated by the maladjustment of industrial Frankenstein, opposing any increase in wages that will help to bridge the chasm between production and consumption—the very condition which renders these merchants and manufacturers unable to sell their wares."

President MacDonald declared that the country's institutions are threatened by these conditions.

"The welfare of the great mass of our people is menaced by the appalling situation revealed by reports which show that wages and salaries paid by industries in the United States were $45,000,000 less in the first half of 1930 than in the first half of 1929, yet during the same period dividend payments of these industries were $350,000,000 more. Reports show that the railroads paid out $91,000,000 less in salaries during the first six months of 1930, but paid $39,000,000 more in dividends."

WOULD CURB JOB AGENTS

Albany, N. Y., April 4.—The Gates bill, that would regulate private employment agencies in this State, passed the Senate.

Senators from New York and Buffalo, in which virtually all of these agencies are located, opposed the measure. The usual "home rule" plea was made.

VICIOUS BILL KILLED

Salt Lake City, Utah, April 4.—The State Legislature killed a bill that would permit voluntary associations to sue and be sued. The measure was aimed at labor unions, and would permit a jury to award damages against a trade union for unauthorized and illegal acts of an individual member.

JOB INSURANCE STUDY FAVORED BY GOVERNOR

New York, April 4.—The creation of a commission to report to next year's Legislature a plan to establish "some kind of scientific unemployment insurance" was recommended by Governor Roosevelt in a special message to the State Legislature. He also recommended that the present unofficial Committee on Stabilization of Employment be made an official commission.

The State Executive referred to these two proposals as "important phases of the unemployment problem," and urged the Legislature to take action at this session.

"American labor seeks no charity, but only a chance to work for its living," he said.

"The relief which workers of this State should be able to anticipate, when engulfed in a period of depression, should be one of insurance, to which they themselves have in large measure contributed. The State itself should likewise bear a part of the premium for this insurance, and the State, in the interest of its own citizens, and to prevent a recurrence of the widespread hardship of these days, should at least supervise its operations.

"Any nation worthy of the name should, in these unemployment periods, to offer employment to every able-bodied citizen willing to work. An enlightened government should look further ahead. It should help its citizens insure themselves during good times against the evil days of hard times to come."

UNEMPLOYMENT LOSSES REACH HUGE FIGURE

New York, April 4.—The equivalent of 750,000,000 full-time workers were unemployed in this city during December, according to the Welfare Council, a federation of social agencies.

The loss in wages for approximates $18,750,000, or about $80,000,000 a month.

Of every 100 persons ordinarily gainfully employed, 18.5 per cent were employed in December, the report says. When time is considered the proportion reached 24 or 25 per cent.

That the situation at the end of February was as bad, at least, as in December was the conclusion of the report when it pointed to the State index of factory employment in February, 1931, was 2.2 points lower than in January, December or February.

The study was made by Edna Lonigan, former chief statistician of the New York State Department of Labor and now on the staff of the President's Committee on Social Trends.

TRADE UNIONIST KILLED

Torrington, Conn., April 4.—Charles J. Moore, president Connecticut Federation of Labor, was killed when his automobile crashed into a tree near Derby. He was returning to his home here when the accident occurred.

MORE ALIENS BARRED

Washington, April 4.—More than 86,000 aliens have been barred the last five months from admission to this country by a stricter interpretation of the immigration law, according to a White House statement.

Depression Aids Five-Day Week; Fear of Strike Forces Work Gains

Washington, April 4.—Poor business conditions have been an impetus to the five-day week, according to Ethelbert Stewart, commissioner Federal Bureau of Labor Statistics. The cost of operating for four hours on Saturday is another factor, while the fear of strikes "has induced" many employers to improve working conditions.

"Obstacles have been removed from the path leading to the adoption of the shorter working week by the lack of sufficient orders in many instances, to keep plants busy more than three days a week," said Mr. Stewart.

"There will, of course, be a certain percentage of establishments operated by persons with backward ideas of business management which will revert to the five and one-half or six-day week when business gets back to normal," continued the statistician. "But the majority of plants which have been forced to go on the reduced schedule will keep it reduced, as the feasibility and economic soundness of the five-day week may now be said to have been successfully demonstrated.

"Night work and Sunday operations in such industries as the cotton mills will be found to have declined, also, when conditions again become normal, it is believed.

"The beneficial effects of shorter hours on the employment situation have not been noticed, as yet, because of the fact that operations have been curtailed so greatly. When standing the five-day week to add more workers to their payrolls than they formerly carried.

"Another factor that is inducing the change to the five-day week program is the growing realization of the fact that it is often unprofitable to operate only a half day on Saturdays. The overhead arising from starting up operations for only four hours is proportionately larger than if the plant were active an entire day."